

Then  
& Now

# Chief Master Sgt. Laurence 'Pat' Patrick

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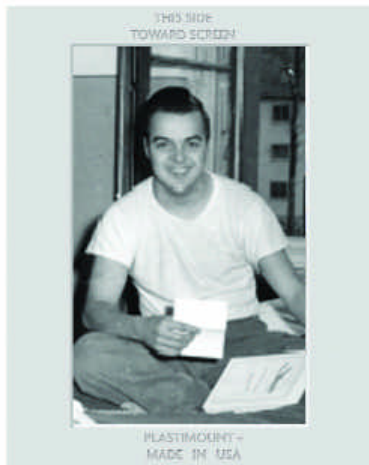
In almost five decades of service to the nation, both in uniform and in civil service, Laurence M. "Pat" Patrick not only excelled in technological endeavors, but also in his commitment to excellence, care for others, volunteer spirit and patriotism. His enthusiasm influenced others who served with him during the years and today he continues his life of service to benefit others.

A legend in the C&I community, he served his country a total of 45 years – 29 years as a bluesuiter retiring as a Chief Master Sergeant in 1980, followed by 16 years in civil service until retirement in 1998. Throughout his career, he was known for his vitality both on and off duty.

"I try to have a positive attitude, and every day I wake up is fantastic," Mr. Patrick said. "However, I think most people take things for granted and don't miss them until they're lost. It's important to take time to enjoy them while you can. I don't mean materialistic things or finances but more important things like family, friends, health, faith and freedom."

Mr. Patrick enlisted in 1951, initially serving as a Morse intercept operator in Germany, with subsequent duties as an airborne radio maintainer and missile maintenance crew chief at several bases in the U.S. In 1968, he moved into communications to become a computer maintenance superintendent, with his final assignment in 1977 as branch chief of computer systems maintenance at Headquarters Air Force Communications Command.

"When I enlisted in 1951, I had no desire to be a lifer," he said. "What convinced me to stay was the co-worker unity, the benefits, job security, retire-



Mr. Patrick in Darmstadt, Germany  
circa 1954

ment, patriotism and travel opportunities. Even though most won't make it a career, the training received and educational opportunities do prepare you for the future."

After retiring from active duty in 1980, Mr. Patrick entered civil service in 1981 as an electronics quality assurance specialist for the Army in St Louis, Mo. In 1982, he returned to AFCC at nearby Scott AFB, Ill.

Mr. Patrick continued to excel in his technical and managerial efforts, serving as chief of 11 different divisions and branches at AFCC/AFC4A/AFCA until his retirement in 1998. In his final position, he was the field support branch chief of the Information Protection Division at AFCA. During the years, he applied four very simple rules in working with others: Take care of your people, and they will take care of you; it's nice to talk to your people but more important that you listen to them; praise in public and counsel in private but be fair to everyone; if you disagree with your boss, tell him/her and let them know why. If they still say do it, give them 110 percent.

Since retiring, Mr. Patrick continues to assist others. Today, with Chris, his

wife of 48 years, they remain a strong team heading a close family with visiting claiming much of their time. Mr. Patrick and Chris reside in their retirement home on what he likes to call Patrick Hill overlooking Scott AFB. Much of the yield from their sizable garden is canned and shared with others. Mr. Patrick also conducts genealogical research and has traced his wife's heritage back to circa 1400. Mr. Patrick supports Sunday school activities and a seniors' program at his local church. He's also an avid runner for many years who often placed at or near the top in numerous competitions.

"The key to a healthy retirement is keeping active. I am past 70, still fit into my uniform, occasionally run four or five miles, and frequently walk with my wife on her daily four-mile walk," he said.

An exemplar of duty, professionalism, patriotism, and compassion, as well as a longstanding mentor to officer, enlisted, and civilian personnel, he salutes those who have served in the past and those who serve today.

"Whether active duty, Reserve, Guard, or civilian, communicators are the best. I know because I have been around the best for 45 years.



Mr. Patrick with his family at his retirement ceremony. From left: His wife, Christina, daughter, Gail, granddaughter, Sara and son-in-law, then Maj. Tony Klucking.